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## **Congress monitoring visit to France**

Strasbourg, 26 May 2015 – The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe will make a monitoring visit to France from 26 to 29 May 2015. The delegation will be composed of Jakob Wienen (EPP/CCE, Netherlands), Rapporteur on local democracy and Mayor of Katwijk, and Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (SOC, Austria), Rapporteur on regional democracy and Vice-President of the State Parliament of Salzburg.

This is the first visit to assess the application of the European Charter of Local Self-Government since its ratification by France in 2007. The Congress rapporteurs will examine in particular the territorial reform in progress and especially the conditions of consultation of the regions in the light of the Charter.

On 26 May meetings are scheduled with representatives of the Ministry of Decentralisation, State Reform and Public Services, the Senate delegation for local and regional authorities and decentralisation, and the Ombudsman. The Congress rapporteurs will also meet the French delegation to the Congress of the Council of Europe and representatives of national associations of local and regional authorities.

On 27 May the Congress delegation will meet representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Public Accounting and the President of the Regional Chamber of the Court of Audit.

On 28 May the Congress rapporteurs will have exchanges of views with George Pau-Langevin, Minister for Overseas Territories and with Hermano Sanchez Ruivo, municipal councillor responsible for European affairs with the City of Paris.

Finally, on 29 May they will meet several local and regional elected representative including Mario Rossi, Delegated Deputy Mayor, City of Reims, Dominique Lévêque, Mayor of Aÿ and President of the Community of Municipalities of the Greater Marne Valley, Jean-Paul Bachy, President of the Champagne-Ardenne Regional Council and Benoist Apparu, Mayor of Châlons-en-Champagne and former Minister for Housing.

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The Congress has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. It brings together 318 full and 318 substitute members representing more than 200 000 European territorial communities.

President of the Congress: Jean-Claude Frécon (France, SOC), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities: Anders Knappe (Sweden, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Regions: Gudrun Mosler-Törnström (Austria, SOC)

Political Groups: Socialist Group (SOC), Group of the European People's Party – Christian Democrats (EPP/CD), Independent and Liberal Democrat Group (ILDG), European Conservatives & Reformists Group (ECR)